

How To Walk A Cat

Ever tried to put a cat on a leash? It seems impossible but cat trainer Catherine Crawmer says you just need to understand how cats think. "The idea of walking in a determined fashion until he 'sees it your way' doesn't work with a cat," she says.

It requires a plan, patience and little bits of time. "Cats, in particular, can make excellent progress in training sessions that last a few minutes," Crawmer says.

To start, you need a collar that fits snugly and about a 20-ft. cord.

Then you need to find a bite-size "treat" your cat really likes. If nothing else, Crawmer recommends small pieces of raw stew beef. The key is to give a treat at the exact moment your cat does what you want. Next, pick a noise such as a whistle, a spoken letter or a clicker toy - anything that's quick and single-toned. The noise is the Pavlovian trigger for the cat. Noise = treat. Practice with the noise and treats until the cat comes running when it hears the noise.

When you first put the leash on the cat's collar, keep a little pressure on the lead at all times. As the cat moves away, keep increasing pressure on the lead until it's about 10 ft. away. Don't let the cat move any further. Then wait until it slackens the lead. At that moment, make the noise and reward the cat. The noise is now the bridge between the cat's action and treat.

In each short lesson, get one to three favorable responses from the cat. A short lesson with a little progress is a lot better than a long lesson.

As the cat becomes comfortable loosening the lead, he will start moving toward you because treats come faster. Then you can start moving him forward and rewarding him.



It takes a plan, patience and "little bits of time" to train a cat to walk on a leash.

While every animal progresses at different rates, keeping expectations low can be beneficial. "Cats remember very well and it's not unusual for them to make giant leaps forward when the animal figures out that he can do something that will result in a positive occurrence for him."

Crawmer sells a book called "Here Kitty Kitty" for those who want to learn more about training cats for \$29.95 plus \$5 S&H.

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Simplicity Garden Tractor Powered By Fairmont Engine

"It's built with a lot of detail and really runs quiet," says John Magnuson, New Hope, Minn., about the 1972 Simplicity 728 garden tractor he repowered with a 1944 Fairmont 13 hp, 2 cycle "section car" engine.

It took Magnuson a year in his spare time to repower the tractor. He had already restored the Fairmont engine, which was originally used to power a railroad section car.

When he bought the Simplicity garden tractor its original 8 hp, 1-cyl. vertical shaft engine had already been removed. He drilled holes into the tractor frame and bolted the Fairmont on. The engine drives a jackshaft with a flat belt that in turn belt-drives the tractor's 3-speed transmission. To make room for the engine, he moved both the steering wheel and the seat back and up. He also fabricated a hand clutch and a revised brake system. "I can operate the clutch either by hand or foot," says Magnuson. Both brake pedals work the brake.

The engine is cooled by a 5-gal. aluminum water hopper. The 3-gal. gas tank is located above. He installed a new muffler designed for a smaller Ford car. "The muffler is big enough to make it one of the quietest Fairmonts around," says Magnuson.

"I like driving it in tractor parades at shows and around our neighborhood. The 2 stroke Fairmont engine is designed to operate either forward or backward. I can reverse the



"I can reverse the engine direction on-the-fly by turning off the ignition, reversing the timing lever, and then, when it's almost stopped, turning the ignition back on," Magnuson says.

engine direction on-the-fly by turning off the ignition, reversing the timing lever, and then when it's almost stopped, turning the ignition back on. People are really amused by this."

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96-Year-Old Not Fixin' To Retire

By Heidi Clausen

At an age when he has every right to slow down and take it easy, Johnny Poirier 96, still goes to work every day.

Each morning, he climbs into his pickup and drives one mile to Johnny's Tractor Shop in Buffalo, where he works about six hours a day, Monday through Saturday, tinkering with magnetos, carburetors and starters.

Sometimes, he even has business hours on Sunday afternoon.

Bernie Lachemeier, one of his six children, watches every day from her house as her dad pulls up the driveway to his shop, where five cats eagerly await his arrival, she says.

"He lived for this place. It was never the money for him," Lachemeier says.

Part of his dedication is his love of the work, but most is for the chance to visit with friends who drop by.

Heart bypass surgery at 88 and two knee replacements couldn't keep him away for long.

In fact, until last summer when his arthritis became too bad, he was still fixing smaller tractors, although on the last tractors, Lachemeier and her husband, Ron had to do the physical work as her dad gave directions.

"He's not allowed to fix any more tractors because I'm tired of putting them back together again," she says with affection.

Born in 1909, Poirier, the oldest of 10 children, spent his early childhood on a farm near Lancaster, Minn.

In 1918, his father was drafted into World War I and his mother moved the family near Waverly.

Up until then, Poirier spoke only French and hadn't been to school. His mother taught the children at home.

He often missed school in the fall to move cows to graze fields after corn was picked and in the spring as planting got under way. School wasn't a priority and after sixth grade, he quit to focus on making a living.

When he was about 12, he got his first job. For about two years, he worked on Model T's for a local mechanic.

He didn't earn wages, he says, but was lucky to get \$1 at Christmas. Yet, it didn't matter. "Mom wanted me to start the trade," he says. "It was the best thing to learn the trade."

After leaving that job, Poirier farmed and fixed neighbors' cars.

In the early 1930's, he met his wife, Elsie, at a house dance. The two married in 1933 and moved several times before settling in Buffalo.

Today, at almost 90, she's still by his side.

During the Depression, Poirier made ends meet by driving truck, hauling machinery, and transporting boxes of ice harvested off the lakes from Minneapolis. He also farmed and did custom work for other farmers.



At 96 years of age, Johnny Poirier still reports to work for 6 hrs. a day, Monday through Saturday.

In 1939, he took a temporary job at a local implement dealer to pay off a repair bill.

That short-term stint turned into a 16-year career, with plenty of 18-hr. days. "They were busy and he was handy," Lachemeier says. "He raised six kids on \$1 an hour."

In 1955, Poirier went into business for himself. "He was a damn good mechanic, and a lot of people knew that," she says.

He even invented his own spark checker for magnetos and has worked on hundreds of them.

His first shop was a small, remodeled garage where the family's priest stored his Model T. Poirier's hoists included three trees in the yard. Mrs. Poirier did the bookkeeping in a playhouse that the children had outgrown.

A few years later, Allis-Chalmers contacted Poirier about starting a company franchise.

He says it was exciting to sell some of Allis-Chalmers' tractors that were new for the time - the D-14, the D-17 and the WD-45. "They had good tractors then," he says.

But when the farm economy went bust in the 1980's, so did Johnny's equipment sales.

Today, Poirier's reputation still stands and he has plenty to keep him busy. But the workload is much less, giving him time to spend with his growing family, which includes 22 grandchildren, 41 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

A highlight of his week is Sunday mornings after church when he and Mrs. Poirier, along with 20 to 25 of their friends and family, meet at a downtown restaurant for breakfast and catching up.

But not long after that, it's back to the shop.

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